

Without that critical component, the free market system is useless.

Medicare was created in 1965 precisely to address the failure of the markets. It was not profitable to treat our seniors with a free market health insurance solution. The market solution to insuring the elderly was simply not to insure them, because, after all, they get sick too often, and insurance companies would have to pay. If you want to make money in the medical insurance game, you insure young, healthy people, not old people.

Luckily for America's seniors, the Democrats controlled Congress, and we set up Medicare. We valued our elders. And even though the markets wanted to leave them behind, we did not. We protected them, and we treated them with the compassion and the dignity they deserved in their old age.

So why do the Republicans want to privatize Medicare so badly? Do they not remember what happened before Medicare, when we left the health of our aging parents and grandparents to the free markets? Are they so swept up in their blind faith in the market that they believe somehow it will just take care of things, even though we already have tried that and we know that it does not work?

Taking care of the elderly is not profitable, nor should it be. Profit is not always the most important thing. These are the people who reared us. They are the people who took care of us when we got sick. They are the people that taught us right from wrong. The Republican proposal is a slap in the face to our parents and to our grandparents.

Every provision of the Republican bill is designed to be a handout to insurance and prescription drug companies, not to give our seniors a better health care plan. The prescription drug plan laid out is available only through private insurance companies and HMOs. There is no provision, no provision to hold down the prices drug companies can charge. It does not ensure that all seniors will be eligible for this coverage, which has been a hallmark of the Medicare program.

And if that was not bad enough, their proposal would increase seniors' costs for doctors' visits by raising the Part B premium and indexing it to inflation. This provision is included for only one reason, one reason, and that is to move people out of traditional Medicare and to force seniors into managed care plans, into HMOs.

Now, I tried to offer a substitute amendment to this bill that would have provided a real prescription drug benefit for Medicare beneficiaries, but it was ruled out of order by the Committee on Rules, out of order because they did not like it, at 4:00 in the morning, in the dark of night, only hours before we voted on the bill.

My amendment would have provided one simple type of coverage, catastrophic coverage against excessively high drug costs for seniors. There were no premiums. There were no copays.

There was no coverage gap. The crux of the plan defined the out-of-pocket spending limit to 6 percent of the adjusted gross income of the beneficiary, with any additional costs being picked up by Medicare.

My plan provided annual spending targets, which would be guaranteed not to exceed the \$400 billion level that President Bush had set. It also called upon the Secretary to encourage the use of prescription drugs and contractual arrangements with pharmacy benefit managers to help control prescription drug costs.

This idea of bringing down the cost of a drug is in sharp contrast to the outrageous, noninterference clause found in the bill that passed this body 2 weeks ago, designed to ensure that drug companies can charge whatever excess price they want for the drugs they choose.

It is clear to me and to my Democratic colleagues, and it will become clear to America's seniors and their families, where the Republicans' loyalties lie. The story has been the same since the start of the 108th Congress. From homeland security to education, from veterans' benefits to the child tax credit, and now, finally, to health and to the well-being of our parents and grandparents, the Republican message is clear: If you are not a powerful corporation, if you do not give money to Republicans, they do not care about you.

THE MIDDLE EAST

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GERLACH). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOFFEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to address the situation in the Middle East. Our government has embarked on a journey promoting the so-called roadmap to peace, and I sincerely hope that the road we are taking is straight and wide and safe, but I am deeply worried.

I support the concept of the roadmap, and I support the idea of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but I do not believe the timing is right. Neither the Bush administration nor the Israeli Government, under pressure from the Bush administration, has required enough of the Palestinians for us to continue successfully on the road at this time.

Simply put, we need the Palestinians to crack down on terror, and they have not done it. In today's Washington Post it was reported that the administration has reversed years of American policy and decided to provide \$20 million directly to the Palestinian Authority. The amount of money is not huge, but the symbolism is.

The theory behind the policy change has some merit, as it hopefully would strengthen the hand of Prime Minister Abbas. But I believe we must demand and see a much greater commitment

toward peace and the end of terrorism from the Palestinians before we reward them with money or support that could, in fact, be used against the Israeli people.

In my opinion, before we seriously pursue the roadmap and before we send \$20 million to the Palestinian Authority, the Palestinian Authority should take concrete action to arrest terrorist leaders, to confiscate terrorist weapons, to dismantle terrorist organizations, to change the cultural bias that allows anti-Semitism to be taught in the schools and broadcast on radio and TV, and to stop honoring suicide terrorists with public posters and street names.

Until the Palestinian Authority cracks down on terror, the Palestinian cause should not be rewarded with a Palestinian state. We can make progress in the Middle East, we must make progress in the Middle East, but with this progress we must demand effective action from the Palestinians to stop terror. This will protect the innocent as we move down that road to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. STRICKLAND addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GREEN of Texas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HINCHEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HEAD START

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WATERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, tonight I want to discuss one of the best programs in America, a program that is 38 years old and has served the children of America extremely well. This program has been commended, lauded and talked about by Presidents Clinton and Bush, Sr., and even President Ronald Reagan commended the Head Start program.

This program has never served all of the children who need this program. As a matter of fact, we only serve about 60 percent, I believe, of the children who need the Head Start program. We find

this diverse program in various communities around the country. We find it in the inner cities, in suburban areas, and even in rural communities. And for those communities who are fortunate enough to have the Head Start program, we hear nothing but praises from the parents, from the people who work in the program, from community leaders and elected officials.

Head Start was instituted under the War on Poverty some 38 years ago because the educators and researchers discovered that to the degree that we are able to provide young children with a Head Start experience, they will be better prepared for kindergarten and for education. When they started this program, preschool was only available to the upper middle class, for the most part. Certainly poor people could not afford to give their children a preschool experience, nor could working parents really afford to do that.

So little children who did not have access to preschool programs did not have the opportunity to take trips to the zoo. As a matter of fact, they did not have opportunities to take trips to farms. They did not have opportunities to take a ride on a train. They found that most of the children, particularly in poor communities, had never been 20 miles away from home. So Head Start came into being under the War on Poverty, and what a wonderful program it has been.

This program was developed a little bit differently than regular education. It was decided that Head Start would address the whole child and the family and the community. In Head Start, children get a physical examination. In Head Start, children get nutrition. They get breakfast, and they are served lunch. In Head Start, not only do children have physical examinations, receive proper nutrition, but one of the most important components of Head Start is the parental involvement component of Head Start.

I know about this program, because 38 years ago I had the great opportunity to work with the Head Start program. I started with Head Start at its inception, and I started as an assistant teacher in the classroom, working with the children. But I soon learned that I really wanted to work with the parents, and I eventually became the Supervisor of Parent Involvement and Volunteer Services.

I had the opportunity to welcome parents to the Head Start site. I had the opportunity to get parents involved with the inspection of the program, in helping determine the budget of the program, in helping to give input to the teachers.

Parents soon learned that they really did have a lot to give. Many parents who thought, because they were not educated, that they could not be of assistance to their children, but they soon learned that they could determine their children's educational destiny.

What a wonderful experience it was, seeing parents getting more involved

with their children, and children becoming alive. We found children with learning disabilities, learning disabilities that never would have been detected had they not come to Head Start. We found that there were children who did not see well, whose parents would never have had the money for eye examinations and who received corrections. We discovered that there were children with emotional and mental difficulties, and, for the first time, they had access to psychological and psychiatric help if it was needed.

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Now we are at a point in time where this administration wants to change Head Start. Some of our Members are saying if it is not broke, do not fix it. That is absolutely true. Why do we have this administration now wanting to take our precious Head Start program and block grant it to the States?

They are simply saying we want to get the Federal Government out of the business of running Head Start programs. What they are saying is we want to dump it into the laps of the States. Please do not send it to California. We have a \$38 billion deficit. If this administration block grants Head Start to California with no mandates, I will tell Members what will happen to Head Start. They are going to siphon off the money to help pay the bills.

As we look around the country, we are finding that many of our States are in great difficulty. This administration is not only talking about block granting Head Start, but also section 8 housing programs, everything they can get their hands on, divesting itself of the running of programs that are so vital to this country. I do not want this administration to make the mistake of dismantling this program.

Mr. Speaker, all I can say in closing is we have to fight to keep Head Start. We have to make sure that this program is available to the children, not cut back, not block granted, but expanded so more children will have the opportunity for this wonderful experience.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE COVER-UP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GERLACH). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few moments to discuss what happened in the House Committee on the Judiciary. The Committee on the Judiciary on a straight party-line vote rejected the resolution of inquiry presented by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) asking that the Congress investigate the Department of Justice activities in Texas regarding the Texas legislators who broke a quorum several months ago.

Why is this so important? Because to restore the integrity of the Justice De-

partment, Congress must investigate the Department's involvement in helping Texas Republicans in a strictly partisan political matter. Congress must unveil the facts and clear the air quickly because if the redistricting scheme of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) somehow succeeds, these same Texas Republicans will be asking the same Justice Department to certify that its new plan does not disenfranchise African Americans and Hispanics in my State of Texas.

Earlier this year, as I mentioned, Texas Republican leaders abused Federal law enforcement for political purposes in a manner Americans had not seen since Richard Nixon and Watergate 30 years ago. In May when Texas State legislators blocked the gentleman from Texas's (Mr. DELAY) unprecedented redistricting scheme with a legal parliamentary maneuver, breaking a quorum which Republicans have done in the U.S. Senate and which Abe Lincoln did in the Illinois legislature in the last century, they violated no State or Federal laws.

In their response, Texas Republican leaders treated Federal law enforcement as their own personal political police force. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) acted as if the Department of Justice was an arm of the Republican Party. The majority leader in the U.S. House of Representatives, which is charged with overseeing the Justice Department, publicly urged the FBI and the U.S. marshals to arrest these legislators in Oklahoma and drag them back to Texas. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) privately contacted the Department of Justice, a fact that he denied at first.

Mr. Speaker, an FBI agent in Corpus Christi, Texas, tried to track down the Texas Democratic legislators and indicated they were conducting surveillance. The Justice Department is stonewalling, and so Congress must investigate and do so immediately.

Mr. Speaker, what happened in the Committee on the Judiciary today on a party-line vote was wrong and should not stand.

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT FIRST CLASS GLADIMIR PHILLIPE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GERLACH). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask my colleagues here in the House of Representatives to join me in honoring a true American hero, Sergeant First Class Gladimir Phillippe, who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country when he lost his life in Iraq two weeks ago.

At a funeral service over the Fourth of July weekend at St. Joseph the Carpenter Church in Roselle, New Jersey, hundreds of friends, family, and members of his community came to pay their last respects to this outstanding young man who strived to achieve the American dream.

The son of Haitian immigrants and one of nine children, Sergeant Phillippe wanted to